

Back in the '70s, Leon Russell made a habit of turning up on everybody else's albums, so it's no surprise that Bruce Hornsby who also plays with everybody co-produced and plays on Russell's first album in years, *Anything Can Happen* (Virgin). It's nothing special, though Russell's naturally funky, bein' from Oklahoma and all. There's some all right tracks like "Jezebel," "Angel Ways," and "Faces of the Children." There's some stupid shit like "Love Slave," which features his son-in-law playing metal guitar, a pointless version of Chuck Berry's "Too Much Monkey Business," and lots of flirtations with modern synthesized sounds that sometimes work and sometimes don't. Russell can still sing though, and no one has duplicated his gospel rock piano style. He'll no doubt play the album and hopefully older (and better) songs like "Hummingbird."

Opening are one of the more polished local groups, the Outriders, whose new CD *Distant Train* (Incredible) sounds like a blend of the Eagles, Little Feat and the Band. They need to get their lyrics away from obvious cliches, but "Thin Line," "Bed of Thorns" and "Walking Papers" are standout songs. In person, they let their R and B influences come across more than they do on record.

Leon Russell with the Outriders: Sat., July 27 at 9 p.m. at the Chestnut Cabaret, 38th and Chestnut Sts., 382-1201.

--Peter Brown